

REMARKS

This communication is in response to the Office Action mailed on January 25, 2005. In the Office Action, claims 12-21 and 53-63 were pending.

The Office Action first reports that a new title is required. Accordingly, with this amendment a new title is provided.

The Office Action next reports that claims 12, 16 and 17 were rejected as being anticipated by Challberg et al. (US 5,624,047), while claims 12-18, 20, 53, 54, 57 and 58 were anticipated by Sibel (FR 2,659,259). Applicant has amended claim 12 in a manner believed to patentably distinguish the present invention from both of these references.

As amended claim 12 recites a gantry support structure comprising an elongated damping structure comprising a plurality of overlapping elongated segments forming at least a portion of a housing. Overlapping segments proximate each other are joined together with a damping material disposed therebetween to define a corresponding fastening region. In addition, adjacent fastening regions are spaced apart from each other along a cross-section of the housing taken transversally with respect to elongation of the overlapping segments.

Neither Challberg et al. nor Sibel teach or suggest this structure. Challberg is cited for disclosing overlapping segments 6f, 6g with damping material 28, 30. However, at least with respect to the damping material, Challberg et al. teach spacer rings 28a, 30a (See Column 6, lines 41-54), which clearly do not meet the claim features of claim 12.

The invention of claim 12 is also patentably distinguishable from the teachings of Sibel. Sibel discloses U-shaped members that appear to be connected at longitudinal edges thereof to a plate member. Interposed between the plate members

is a material. However, the material appears to extend completely over the outer surface of the inner member and completely over the inner surface of the outer member. There is simply no teaching of the construction recited in claim 12 wherein spaced apart fastening regions taken in cross section are present between the overlapping segments. It is this construction that provides the damping characteristics of the present invention.

In view of the foregoing, applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of claim 12.

The dependent claims depend directly or indirectly from claim 12 and are believed separately allowable. With this amendment, applicant has also added independent claim 64, which for reasons similar to claim 12 and where the plate members are clearly not connected at both longitudinal edges to the rigid plate, is also believed allowable.

The Office Action reports that claims 21, 55, 56 and 59-63 were allowable. Applicant respectfully acknowledges this indication of allowability; however, for the reasons discussed about it is believed that claim 12 is allowable as amended.

An extension of time is hereby requested for responding to this Office Action. A charge authorization for the extension of time fee is included herewith.

The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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